

Appl. No. 09/306,813
Reply to Office Action of October 20, 2005

REMARKS

In regard to the Examiner's response to arguments and the statements contained therein, Applicants respectfully submits that the currently amended claims now clearly require that the switch IS REQUIRED to select one from a group of signals as listed. Applicants submit that the plain language of the claim is no narrower than before, and may actually be broader. More specifically, Applicants submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that a switch is operable to disconnect and/or connect a plurality of signals, and that the plain language of the claims in the previous amendment required a switch capable of being connected to all of the listed signals but only connected to one at a time. Applicants remind the Examiner that in order for a switch to operably select from a multitude of signals, those signals must be physically connected to the switch, as shown in Figures 2A, 2B and supporting specification, and therefore form limitations to the claims. In any event, solely to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended the claims to ensure proper claim construction by the Examiner.

In regard to the Examiner's rejection of claims 2 - 4 under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to Figure 1 and the bottom of page 10 of the specification to the middle of page 11. In these sections, it is clearly disclosed that the inputs switches SW1 and SW2 can be placed in a float condition, and $\Phi 1'$ and $\Phi 2'$ then driven to provide for an alternate driving method of the horizontal charge

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transfer portions. Counter to Examiner's assertion, there are not "two separate driving pulses [being] applied to the same input [simultaneously]."

There are numerous ways in which one of ordinary skill in the art could provide for $\Phi 1'$ and $\Phi 1$ as alternate drivers. For example, $\Phi 1'$ and $\Phi 1$ can both be connected to the same input pin of the horizontal readout register such that $\Phi 1'$ is floated while $\Phi 1$ is driving it, and is not driven until SW1 and/or SW2 is floated. Alternatively, there could be additionally logic that ands, ors, muxes, adds, subtracts, etc. the two driving signals. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request Examiner withdraw the §112 rejection, and place claims 2 – 4 in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the prior art rejections set forth by the Examiner under 35 USC §§102 and 103. Applicants respectfully submit that the prior art references of record, whether considered alone, or in combination, fail to either teach or suggest Applicants presently claimed invention. In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, at least one pulse signal is replaced with a fixed voltage level or a floating level via a switch which selects from the group comprising the drive signal, the fixed voltage level, and the floating level. At best, the Endo reference describes replacing a pulse signal with a fixed level. There is simply no teaching or suggestion whatsoever regarding the selective replacement of a pulse signal with a floating level and a fixed level, or a system or method wherein a single pulse signal may be replaced with a signal selected from the group of signals consisting of a fixed level and a floating level.

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Specifically in regard to the Examiner's assertions concerning the switching to the floating level, Applicants note that the asserted floating levels Pe and Pf are actually an offset and not a floating output. See specifically the Endo reference at Column 9, lines 28-35.

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims now stand in condition for allowance.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 20-1495.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

2/14/06


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